

CONFIDENTIAL

JOURNAL

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL

Thursday - 5 August 1971

1. (Confidential - GLC) George Murphy, Joint Committee on Atomic Energy staff, called and asked about the accuracy of the column in the Washington Post this morning on Communist Chinese MRBM sites. I told Murphy the article was in error in many respects but that I would ask our people for a paper on it and talk with him about it tomorrow.

2. (Confidential - GLC) At lunch today Bill Woodruff, Counsel, Senate Appropriations Committee, again commented that when the Foreign Assistance Act is reported out of the Foreign Relations Committee it will contain serious limitations on the Agency and on the Director's authority. He mentioned as an example limitations on Agency involvement in paramilitary activities such as those proposed in Senator Cooper's bill (S. 2224). He also mentioned that the Committee reported the continuing resolution this morning.

3. (Confidential - GLC) Obtained from the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee copies of the testimony of Thomas E. Mosher which had been requested by [REDACTED]

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Al Tarabochia, of the Subcommittee staff, mentioned that Reader's Digest is planning to do an article about Mosher's trip and it will appear in one of their issues shortly.

4. (Unclassified - GLC) Left with Mr. Charles Kendrick, Administrative Assistant to Senator Peter Dominick (R., Colo.), a copy of a letter from John H. Heckers, Executive Director, Department of Revenue, State of Colorado, to Representative Frank Evans (D., Colo.) stating that a determination had been made to exempt from Colorado State Income Tax annuities paid to Colorado residence under the CIARDS.

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Laos: New Report, Old Story

The new Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff report on Laos reveals that Washington's involvement in the formerly secret war there is far deeper, and Vientiane's contribution to its own security is far shallower, than practically anybody outside Laos had believed. The Royal Army is pathetic, lucky to muster 25 men in a battalion of 300, the report indicates, so the Central Intelligence Agency now runs an army of 30,000 Lao irregulars (1971 cost: \$70 million) who do battle against the Communist Pathet Lao and North Vietnamese forces fighting in the north. So many Lao soldiers have died, draft-dodged, deserted or enlisted in the Pathet Lao, however, that the CIA found it necessary to import some 4,000 Thai "volunteers" (\$35 million) to help out.

The American effort in Laos cost \$284 million in fiscal 1971, excluding funds for Thais in Laos and for the immensely expensive bombing campaigns against the Ho Chi Minh trail in the south and the fighting grounds around the Plain of Jars in the north. In fiscal 1972 the figure is expected to reach \$374 million. Economic aid is almost half again as large as the total Lao budget. In a country where per capita GNP is estimated at \$66, American spending amounts to \$141 per capita; services rendered include, if you will, the hiring of 24 Filipinos to teach Lao soldiers English. The Lao government, the report says, "continues to be almost totally dependent on the U.S., perhaps more dependent on us than any other government in the world."

And meanwhile, North Vietnamese men and materiel flow down the Ho Chi Minh trail into South Vietnam, Pathet Lao and North Vietnamese forces push into the third of the country not yet under their control, and the tiny country suffers the ravages of an immense war. The precise extent to which the situation there is deteriorating is described in the conclusion of the staff report, published elsewhere on this page today.

Well, what's new? The details are juicy but the thrust of the report is consistent with Mr. Nixon's major statement on Laos of March 6, 1970. He said then that the American purposes in Laos were to save American and allied lives in South Vietnam, by bombing; and to support the "independence and neutrality of Laos as set forth in the 1962 Geneva agreements," by aiding the Laotian government

"when requested." Specifying certain forms of that aid, the President said the U.S. also was conducting "some other activities." Well, now we know "other activities" included items like 14,000 sorties a month, in January, 1970, and unnumbered B-52 raids, still going on, and up.

Through declassifying the previous secret information in the Senate report, however, the President has in fact respected in good measure his earlier pledge "to give the American people the fullest possible information on our involvement (in Laos), consistent with national security." We cannot recall that any other administration ever disclosed so much about secret and continuing operations of the CIA. Unofficial reports had indicated the existence of a CIA role in Laos but there had been no official confirmation or description of it.

Mr. Nixon has not, of course, told all. In particular, he has not conceded that, as Mr. Fulbright and others suspect, funds for CIA support of Thai "volunteers" in Laos came from a defense money bill which had attached to it a Fulbright amendment banning precisely such subterfuges. If so, this is an outrage, but a predictable outrage. It would be unrealistic to think that an administration bent on prosecuting a secret war could not surmount an obstacle like the Fulbright amendment. "Let's face it," Mr. Symington said, in a secret session of the Senate which took place June 7 and whose proceedings were published yesterday, "We have been appropriating money for this war in the blind." Exactly so.

Since it is already widely recognized that the American effort in Laos is linked to the larger effort in South Vietnam and could not survive it, we doubt that anyone will be so shocked and outraged as to demand an end to American activities in Laos now. But the essential point should not be lost. By operating in secrecy and, more than that, by building an organization intended to operate in secrecy, the United States government provided itself the resources to take steps which — if it had been required to take and explain them in public — it might not have taken at all. When a democracy undertakes a policy built on secrecy, it risks falling into such a swamp that — and this is the ultimate irony — it is finally no longer embarrassed by disclosure. On the contrary, it winds up using it to plead for public understanding and support.

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8. (Unclassified - GLC) Talked with [] about OTR's interest in his participating in an Advance Intelligence Seminar program on 17 September (see Journal of 4 August). [] said he would like very much to do this, but the timing of this coincides with a trip he has planned to Europe and he will be unable to participate. He suggested as possible alternatives Mr. Peter Lakela, Executive Secretary to Senator Jacob Javits (R., N.Y.) or Richard Moose, Foreign Relations Committee staff.

9. (Secret - GLC) Bill McAfee, State Department INR, called and asked if we would transmit a confidential cable from State Department to the deputy chiefs of missions concerned about the upcoming travel of a congressional staff member. McAfee LDX'd over the cable and FE is sending the message.

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10. (Confidential - JMM) Senator Henry M. Jackson called early this morning to say that Gerry Landauer, an "investigative reporter" for the Wall Street Journal, had queried him about allegations that []

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I was sure there was nothing to any of this, but would investigate and verify.

After looking into the matter, I called the Senator's office and, in his absence, told Dorothy Fosdick, of his staff, that these allegations had apparently been cooked up by lawyers representing [] who were involved in litigation regarding the U.S. Navy's use of a target range on []

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11. (Confidential - JMM) Called James Gehrig, Staff Director, ^{STATOTHR} Senate Aeronautical and Space Sciences Committee, to say that we had no

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security clearances. I recommended that Gehrig take this matter up with the Space Council in the White House.

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